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C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000980

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

AF FOR DAS T. WOODS
AF/S FOR B. NEULING
OVP FOR NULAND
NSC FOR DNSA ABRAMS, SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR C. COURVILLE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/31/2010

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [ASEC](#) [Z1](#)

SUBJECT: GOZ ANNOUNCES SUSPENSION OF DEMOLITIONS

REF: HARARE 976 AND PREVIOUS ON "RESTORE ORDER"

Classified By: Charge d' Affaires a.i. under Section 1.4 b/d

[1](#)1. (SBU) On July 15, Housing Minister Ignatius Chombo announced that the GOZ would halt Operation Restore Order, the GOZ's nationwide campaign to demolish "unauthorized structures" (reftel), for ten days in order to allow low-density suburb residents time to legalize any structures that do not conform to their land,s official plans. The Embassy is unaware of any demolitions in urban or rural areas that have taken place since the minister,s announcement. We will, however, continue to monitor the government,s actions.

[1](#)2. (C) Comment: It seems clear that the surprise hiatus came under duress. Local media reports speculate that the suspension was the result of last weeks, visit by South Africa's new Vice President. The Vice President,s visit was itself apparently in response to growing disapproval from fellow Africans of the operation, including especially the UN Special Envoy,s report, which is expected to be critical, and the tough statement from the South African Council of Churches after their visit last week. As much as the respite is welcome news, even more welcome is the apparent involvement of the SAG in an effort to moderate the Mugabe regime and its policies.
SCHULTZ